



Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7514th meetingFriday, 28 August 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mrs. Ogwu. (Nigeria)

Members:

Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
Chad	Mr. Gombo
Chile	Mr. Barros Melet
China	Mr. Zhao Yong
France	Mr. Lamék
Jordan	Mrs. Kavar
Lithuania	Mrs. Jakuboné
Malaysia	Mr. Abdul Razak
New Zealand	Mr. Taula
Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
Spain	Mr. Gasso Matoses
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Rycroft
United States of America	Mr. Pressman
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Ramírez Carreño

Agenda

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on the progress made with regard to the stabilization of and restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau (S/2015/619)

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2015/626)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau

Report of the Secretary-General on the progress made with regard to the stabilization of and restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau (S/2015/619)

Report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (S/2015/626)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Timor-Leste to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mr. Miguel Trovoada, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, and His Excellency Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and Permanent Representative of Brazil.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/619, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the progress made with regard to the stabilization of and restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau.

I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2015/626, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on developments in Guinea-Bissau and the activities of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau.

I now give the floor to Mr. Trovoada.

Mr. Trovoada (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Madam President, for the opportunity afforded me to present to the Security Council the most recent report (S/2015/626) of the Secretary-General on the situation in Guinea Bissau and on the activities of the United

Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNOGBIS).

His Excellency the President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, Mr. José Mário Vaz, who had planned to speak at this Council meeting, decided to resign owing to the recent political events in his country. Just a little over a year after the restoration of the constitutional order, Guinea-Bissau is again experiencing political turbulence, following the President's dismissal of the Government of Prime Minister Domingos Simões Pereira, on 12 August. On August 20, Mr. Baciro Djá, former Minister of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the dismissed Government, was appointed Prime Minister by a presidential decree and was sworn in by the President on the same day. Before removing the Prime Minister, President Vaz sent a message to the nation in which he set forth his observations about the state of the country, the action of the executive power, the relations among the country's institutions, in general, and between himself and the Head of Government, in particular, and on the factors giving rise to a serious political crisis that, under the Constitution, could lead to the fall of the Government.

This is an unexpected situation, since the main institutions of the State, formed after the general elections of April and May 2014, are all from the same political family, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde. The party, whose statute states that, if the party wins the election, its leader will be the candidate for Prime Minister, now enjoys an absolute majority in Parliament. Moreover, the party chose among its leaders and presented as presidential candidate the current President of the country. The dismissed Government was inclusive, including almost all political parties represented in the People's National Assembly, which guaranteed that it had a comfortable base of parliamentary support. It therefore seemed that, a priori, the main conditions had been met to ensure a framework for political stability that was favourable to the proper functioning of the State. Upon the initiative of the Government, and with the support of the United Nations Development Programme and the European Union, a round table of Guinea-Bissau's cooperation partners was held in Brussels last March, the results of which have opened for the country the prospect of obtaining significant financial resources for the realization of its Strategic and Operational Plan 2015-2020.

In previous reports to the Security Council on Guinea-Bissau, it was always emphasized that stability in the country remained fragile because the underlying causes of the recurrent instability that undermined it had not been eradicated. Recently, the statements made in public by the State's highest officials gave rise to an impression that there was a climate of political tension that might lead to institutional failure if they did not seek to overcome their disagreements through dialogue. The absence of this essential dialogue left the way open to the heightening of mutual distrust and the deepening of antagonisms, ensuring that the country would arrive at the point where it is today.

In the exercise of the good offices mission of the Secretary-General that I lead locally in Guinea-Bissau in his name and as his representative, I maintain frequent contacts with Government entities at the highest levels and with the political class and the different components of civil society. Given the unfolding of current events, these contacts have been intensified in order to urge the parties concerned to favour dialogue as the most reliable tool to achieve a lasting solution to the conflict among them. I am pleased to note that representatives of the international community in Guinea-Bissau, both bilaterally and multilaterally, were mobilized and engaged in the same direction, making their voices heard in unison and calling for dialogue and an agreement in order to safeguard political stability and peace, so that the achievements of the return to democratic order and constitutional normality would not be called into question.

It is worth noting here the efforts made personally by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and by the President Macky Sall of Senegal and President Alpha Condé of Guinea, in their respective capacities as Chair of the Economic Community of West African States and that organization's mediator for Guinea-Bissau. I also wish to commend the positions of solidarity with the people of Guinea-Bissau expressed by the African Union, the European Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the Peacebuilding Commission and its country-specific configuration for Guinea-Bissau, the presence of whose Chair, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, I welcome, as well as the many other organizations and friendly countries that voiced concern about the current crisis and expressed their hope that Guinea-Bissau would rise to the stability challenge and continue without upheavals on the path towards economic development

and progress. The Council has also closely followed the situation through briefings, after which it has made public statements in support of dialogue and consultation.

Before concluding, I would like to make three observations about the political situation in Guinea-Bissau.

First, the political parties and all those who have a role to play in resolving this crisis are proclaiming their firm determination to democratically defend their rights and their legitimacy in the context of strict respect for the Constitution and the law. Secondly, the demonstrations that have taken place so far have been peaceful, orderly and without any clashes or violence. Thirdly, during a meeting I had with the Chief of the General Staff, including the commanders of the three branches of the armed forces, the military strongly affirmed that it was determined to remain completely outside the political scene and observe a republican attitude of submission to civil authority and obedience to the Constitution and the democratic institutions of the State.

The international community, which has always supported Guinea-Bissau in the course of the various hardships that the country has faced, remains open to backing it in its march towards development and progress, as was recently demonstrated again at the Brussels round table. But it is clear that, in a scenario of repeated crises without peace or lasting stability, support from the international community has not been able to find fertile ground so that its efforts can fully achieve the desired objectives. I am convinced that the leaders of Guinea-Bissau, in whom the people have placed their hope and trust, are well aware of that fact and that, in an outpouring of patriotism and sense of responsibility to history, they will do everything within their reach not to jeopardize the great opportunity they have before them to transform their country and significantly improve the living conditions of their people.

The President: I thank Mr. Trovoada for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Patriota.

Mr. De Aguiar Patriota: I wish to thank you, Madam President, for the invitation to address the Security Council this morning in my capacity as the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the

Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Let me also thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Miguel Trovoadá for his detailed briefing and update on the political crisis that Guinea-Bissau is facing today. I am particularly grateful for his ongoing efforts to help end the crisis and for his cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission in this matter and in the broader peacebuilding agenda in Guinea-Bissau.

Last week on 17 August 2015, I chaired a meeting of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the PBC to discuss the situation in Guinea-Bissau and ways for the PBC to respond to the escalation of a crisis that had begun as tension between President Vaz and former Prime Minister Simões Pereira. At that meeting, I reported a telephone conversation I had with Special Representative of the Secretary-General Trovoadá on Friday, 14 August. The configuration also heard a comprehensive briefing by Mr. João Honwana, Director of the Africa II Division of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA). Their insightful input enabled members of the PBC to have a useful discussion. A statement was issued on 18 August in which the PBC expressed concern that recent political developments might undermine the progress achieved so far and risk destabilizing the fragile political situation in the country and compromise economic progress. In the statement, the PBC regretted that national, regional and international efforts to help resolve the political crisis, in particular the Security Council statement of 12 August (SC/12007) calling for the resumption of dialogue and the statement of the representatives of the international community in Bissau issued on 10 August, as well as the engagement of the African Union, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries and the European Union, had not prevented an escalation of the crisis.

The PBC called for the resumption of political dialogue in order to address the current tensions, with full respect for the national Constitution and the rule of law, and for the national stakeholders to find a concerted way out of the current political crisis. To complement the briefing and suggestions of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General Trovoadá, let me offer three main comments.

First, the current crisis carries the risk of having a negative impact on the already fragile economic situation, the stability of the country and its democratic gains. The PBC believes that Guinea-Bissau was making good progress towards stabilization and development since the elections of 2014 and the round table held

in Brussels in March 2015. Our main goal should be to prevent possible escalation of the political crisis to undermine the progress achieved so far. The PBC and the international community as a whole have invested in those processes and in the overall peacebuilding agenda in Guinea-Bissau. The efforts undertaken by the PBC have greatly contributed to the holding of free, fair and transparent elections, resulting in a legitimate, competent and inclusive Government for the first time in the history of the country.

For its part, since September 2013, the Peacebuilding Fund has allocated approximately \$4.8 million to contribute to establishing the constitutional order, filling crucial gaps through a package of immediate-response-facility projects, which include support for the Electoral Commission, peace dividends through employment for youth and women, joint work of the DPA and the High-level Commission for Planning, electoral security, the media during and after the elections, women's participation in the elections and the Transnational Crime Unit in Bissau as part of the West Africa Coast Initiative. More recently, the Peacebuilding Fund has approved a new peacebuilding priority plan, amounting to \$10 million to help the Government implement crucial reforms.

Secondly, the nature of the crisis illustrates that there may be space for debates on better delineating the spheres of competence of the President and the Prime Minister so as to avoid it becoming a source of instability and fragility in an otherwise promising environment. In that regard, should Bissau-Guineans eventually decide to go forward with a political reform and request for support, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries are well positioned to provide the expertise that may be required for a revision of the Constitution.

Thirdly, it is worth noting that the various partners of Guinea-Bissau have been consistent, speaking with one voice, in their engagement on the crisis. The role played by the region as well as the coherence demonstrated by international partners will remain a key element to achieve any sustainable solution. In that vein, one cannot overemphasize that the current political deadlock can be overcome only by Bissau-Guineans themselves, through a constructive dialogue based on full respect for the constitutional provisions and the rule of law. The success of Guinea-Bissau is in the hands of its Government and people.

To conclude, allow me to point out that the PBC will continue to complement the work of the Security Council in providing support and advice to the authorities of Guinea-Bissau to address the current crisis and to implement the broader peacebuilding agenda in the country.

The President: I thank Mr. De Aguiar Patriota for his briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. Da Gama (Guinea-Bissau): I thank you, Madam President, for inviting my delegation to the Security Council. I wish to congratulate you on Nigeria's presidency of the Council for the month of August and to wish the Council successful deliberations. It is an honour to see you presiding at this important meeting on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, a country in which Nigeria is very much present and engaged.

Allow me to express my special thanks to His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon for his report on Guinea-Bissau (S/2015/626) and for his personal engagement on the latest developments in my country. The work of his Special Representative, Mr. Miguel Trovoadá, of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau team and of all United Nations offices and agencies in Guinea-Bissau are also very much appreciated.

I would also like to thank His Excellency Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil, in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission; Her Excellency Ambassador Sofia Mesquita Borges, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste, on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries; and His Excellency Ambassador Fodé Seck, Permanent Representative of Senegal, on behalf of the Chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), for their briefings and for their engagement on the situation in Guinea-Bissau.

After a short period on a relatively successful path towards peace and development in the country, once again Guinea-Bissau is confronted with a political crisis. The misunderstanding between His Excellency Mr. José Mário Vaz, President of the Republic, and His Excellency Mr. Domingos Simões Pereira, Prime Minister, unfortunately ended with the dismissal of the Prime Minister, on 12 August, and the nomination

of His Excellency Mr. Baciro Djá as the new Prime Minister, on 20 August.

Despite that situation, the calm and civility that has been demonstrated by the population so far on the decision of the National Assembly to seek the necessary legal guidance of the Supreme Court — which also rules on the constitutionality of decisions in the absence of a constitutional court in the country — as to the constitutionality of the nomination of a new Prime Minister by the President is to be congratulated. That democratic method for finding a solution to the existing differences within the highest levels of the country, in our view, offers assurances that, although difficult, there will be a way out of the political crisis through constitutional and legal procedures. The neutral position of the military so far in the political crisis is very much appreciated, and we hope that they will maintain a position of noninterference.

In that context, we understand the resulting frustration of our partners and all the friends of Guinea-Bissau who have worked so hard to help us to consolidate our democracy and to sustain long-lasting peace and development. However, on behalf of the peaceful people of Guinea-Bissau, who time and time again have demonstrated their commitment to the goals of peace and development, we are counting on the hope that the Council and all our partners will remain engaged with the country. Do not give up on the people of Guinea-Bissau. The dreams and aspirations of youth, and of women as mothers, for a better future for their children are at risk. They have high hopes and expectations on the programmes proposed by the Government that led to the successful donor round table on Guinea-Bissau held in Brussels in March, and they are counting on all of the pledges made by all our partners and friends.

We are aware that we Bissau-Guineans bear the primary responsibility for resolving our internal differences, avoiding instability and promoting sustainable development. But without continued and strong engagement on the part of the international community and close and effective monitoring strategies, all of the efforts made risk being compromised. To that end, the support of the international community towards a peaceful resolution of the current situation is very important. It will help restore confidence in Guinea-Bissau and promote an environment conducive to the disbursement of the funds that have been pledged, thereby leading to the implementation of the reforms

and strategic development programmes that have been proposed by the national authorities.

It has been repeated many times in the Council that the instability in Guinea-Bissau will not end with the elections, and the current situation is such an example. The international community should do more to help consolidate stronger institutions. And it should remain alert and work more closely in terms of guidance, through open and frank dialogue with the national authorities and all political stakeholders, as a way to prevent situations such as the one we are facing today.

It is our hope that the country will overcome this crisis and that the relevant political stakeholders, the National Assembly and civil society will remain engaged in constructive dialogue for the good of Guinea-Bissau and its people.

Before concluding, I would like to express our gratitude for the engagement of the international community in following the political situation in our country. I also wish to commend the continued support of the Secretary-General, the head of ECOWAS, namely, the President of Senegal as its current Chair, the President of the Republic of Guinea, the President of Nigeria and all our partners and friends who have tried their best, and are still trying, to mediate and help Guinea-Bissau resolve the current political crisis and regain its course towards the consolidation of peace and achievement of sustainable development.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Senegal.

Mr. Ciss (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The Senegalese delegation thanks you, Madam President, for allowing us to participate on behalf of the Chair of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). We welcome the holding of this meeting of the Security Council devoted to the situation in the Republic of Guinea-Bissau. We also take this opportunity to commend your deft handling of the high office of the presidency of the Council for the month of August. Allow me also to commend the detailed and informative briefings by Mr. Trovoadá, Mr. De Aguiar Patriota and the Permanent Representative of Guinea-Bissau.

The situation in Guinea-Bissau, which has deteriorated significantly since a decree was issued calling for Prime Minister, Mr. Domingos Simões Pereira, to step down, remains troubling, at a time

when the country needs more than ever before to forge a robust consensus to overcome the numerous challenges it continues to face. Aware of the need to establish and preserve such consensus in order to contribute to the stabilization of the country, His Excellency President Macky Sall, ECOWAS Chair, has offered his good offices in an attempt to renew dialogue among the principal parties. Moreover, in order to prevent further deterioration of the political climate in Guinea-Bissau, he dispatched, on 23 June, his Minister for Foreign Affairs who held talks with the country's authorities, with a view to bolstering confidence among them in order to re-establish properly functioning institutions. In addition, during his stay, the President's envoy took the opportunity to make courtesy calls of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Trovoadá, representative of the European Union Victor Dos Santos, African Union representative Pequeno and ECOWAS representative Ansumana Ceesay.

Subsequently, President José Mário Vaz was received in Dakar on 7 August, in the presence of His Excellency President Alpha Condé of the Republic of Guinea, who was also on an official visit to Dakar, with a view to finding a solution to the political crisis in the country.

Subsequently, on 20 August, President Macky Sall received Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria, who carried a message from current President Muhammadu Buhari and had come to gather opinions and advice with a view to a mission that he was due to undertake to Guinea-Bissau, which he ultimately cancelled, following an appointment on that same day of a new Prime Minister, namely, Mr. Baciro Djá. It is therefore regrettable that the various aforementioned efforts were insufficient to put an end to the crisis.

On 24 August, the National Assembly adopted a resolution calling for the new Prime Minister to step down. As we see it, the situation remains particularly delicate. We believe it is important to call on the various parties to show restraint, so as to ensure a better chance for the diplomatic efforts with a view to establishing trust and peace.

For his part, the ECOWAS Chair regretted the stepping down of Prime Minister Pereira. He also reiterated the commitment undertaken by the political actors in Guinea-Bissau in March during the donor conference in Brussels, including those undertaken by President José Mário Vaz and Prime Minister Pereira

working together towards political stability, economic development and security on behalf of the citizens of Guinea-Bissau.

We highlight and welcome the responsible attitude adopted by the army of Guinea-Bissau, which has kept its distance from the events under way, thereby allowing a greater chance of achieving a political solution to this fragile situation.

Confident that a peaceful, lasting solution can be found to the crisis under way, with the valuable assistance of its partners, the ECOWAS Chair is convinced that the building of peace and stability in Guinea-Bissau can be achieved only through a consensual process, which must be inclusive and nationally owned. Where there is respect for the constitutional order, the interest and well-being of the people of Guinea-Bissau will be at the heart of the discussion to bolster national reconciliation, democracy, good governance and development.

The political tensions should in no way obscure the progress achieved thus far by Guinea-Bissau, particularly in terms of the constitutional revision process, combating corruption through strengthening the judicial system and improving the administration, pursuing defence and security reform and the establishment by the National Assembly of a commission on peace and stability, in order to accelerate the reconciliation process.

The situation I have described calls for pursuing structural defence, security and justice reforms, promoting the rule of law and socioeconomic development, in line with the promotion and protection of human rights and combating impunity.

ECOWAS therefore welcomes the success of the donor round table on Guinea-Bissau held on 25 March in Brussels, with the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme and the European Union. At the conference, international partners supported the Government's National Strategic and Operational Plan for 2015-2020, with pledges standing at \$1.2 billion. In that respect, the Economic Community of West African States calls on international partners to remain strongly mobilized and committed in their support to the stabilization process in Guinea-Bissau, particularly by delivering on their commitments undertaken at that occasion. Such support remains crucial for conducting the aforementioned reforms.

For its part, ECOWAS is continuing its efforts to help Guinea-Bissau maintain peace and security and

to support the reconciliation process. Aware of the importance of security and defence sector reform in the stabilization process, the forty-seventh ordinary session of ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, held in Accra on 19 May, extended the mandate of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau until 31 December. In any case, it goes without saying that security sector reform also requires increased efforts to curb drug trafficking and transnational organized crime in all its forms and manifestations.

The challenges ahead to achieve stabilization in Guinea-Bissau remain enormous. The normalization of the situation in the country will undoubtedly require bolstering democratic gains and coordinating the actions of the various partners in support of efforts made by the Government of Guinea-Bissau. To that end, ECOWAS remains more than ever willing to pursue the work launched with all its partners in order to help Guinea-Bissau to emerge from the current situation.

Allow me to commend the special emphasis placed by the Security Council on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, as well as to commend the efforts of the Secretary-General and of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, in addition to the important support of all the bodies of the United Nations system, the European Union, the African Union, Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

The hope kindled of a return to constitutional order following presidential and legislative elections in Guinea-Bissau must not be extinguished. That is the very essence of the commitment of ECOWAS, including Senegal, towards lasting peace and the harmonious socioeconomic development in Guinea-Bissau.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Timor-Leste.

Mrs. Mesquita Borges (Timor-Leste): At the outset, let me thank you, Madam President, for presiding over this meeting and on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I thank Mr. Trovoada, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, for his briefing to the Council and his efforts to resolve the crisis.

I am honoured to address the Council on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), whose members include Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tomé and Principe and my

own country, Timor-Leste. We welcome the statements issued by the Council on the situation in Guinea-Bissau, as well as the Secretary-General's reports (S/2015/619 and S/2015/626), whose recommendations we fully endorse.

Since the peaceful, free and fair elections of 2014, in which the people of Guinea-Bissau clearly expressed their desire for stability and their commitment to democratic rule, much progress has been made in Guinea-Bissau, not only in the provision of services to the population, or the payment of arrears, but also in the important steps made concerning the much-needed reforms and on consolidation of the rule of law. It is vital for Guinea-Bissau and its people that the gains made are not jeopardized, and that the reforms continue to be implemented.

The CPLP member States regret the recent political developments and remain deeply concerned at the current situation in Guinea-Bissau. We call on all stakeholders, namely, the organs of sovereignty, the political parties represented in Parliament, civil society and others, to engage in constructive political dialogue. Statesmanship is required to defuse the current political crisis, with full respect of the Constitution and the rule of law, as well as the spirit of inclusion.

While the authorities in Guinea-Bissau are solely responsible for resolving the political crisis, it is crucial that the process fully respect the Constitution. It is equally paramount to the continued stability of the country that the reforms initiated be pursued, especially the reforms of the security and justice sectors and the fight against impunity. We welcome the fact that the armed forces of Guinea-Bissau are complying with their constitutional role and the law by avoiding any interference in the present political crisis.

The national Strategic and Operational Plan, entitled "Terra Ranka", reflects the aspirations of Bissau-Guineans for greater political stability and socioeconomic development, as well as for the consolidation of the rule of law and the protection and promotion of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The document, presented by the President and the Prime Minister at the donor round

table in Brussels in March, garnered the support of the international partners. The current political crisis could undermine the progress already made in that regard, and compromise continued economic progress.

We call on the international community to continue to support Guinea-Bissau and its people in the implementation of the State reforms and development plans. At the same time, we stress that the key responsibility for achieving the necessary stable environment of political and institutional cooperation rests on the national stakeholders.

In conclusion, we would like to recognize the concerted efforts of the international community to assist Guinea-Bissau in the crisis. In that regard, we appreciate and commend the efforts of the Peacebuilding Commission, in particular those of Ambassador Patriota, Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration, who convened an opportune meeting on 17 August to evaluate the situation. The meeting resulted in a statement that the CPLP fully endorses.

We also welcome the efforts made by regional leaders and by regional organizations, such as the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). In particular, we thank ECOWAS for its mediation efforts and for the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau's important role in maintaining peace and security.

The CPLP stands ready, together with the rest of the international community, to continue its support to Guinea-Bissau, while fully respecting national ownership. I take this opportunity to inform Council members that, at its meeting of the Council of Ministers held in Dili in July, the CPLP decided to deploy to Guinea-Bissau in the near future a joint mission of the President of the CPLP Council of Ministers and the Executive Secretary.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.